

Program Summary
Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (ASDB)
Cooperative and Satellite Education Programs

Program Overview

The Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (ASDB) provides comprehensive educational programs for approximately 2,100 sensory impaired students from birth to age 22. Approximately 650 of these students attend school at 1 of the 2 ASDB campuses: ASDB Tucson and the Phoenix Day School for the Deaf. The rest are served through off-campus outreach programs, including ASDB regional cooperatives (“Co-Op’s”) and satellite sites.

Whether a child is served at an ASDB campus or through an ASDB Co-op, ASDB satellite site or school district is determined by the child’s Individual Education Plan (IEP), which is a written education plan required for each special education pupil under federal law. An IEP is written by an evaluation team that by law must include at least the parent or legal guardian of the child, an administrator from the school district in which the child resides, a certified teacher of the sensory impaired who provides or may provide educational services to the child, an evaluator, and an ASDB representative.

The rest of this document provides an overview of the ASDB Co-Op and Satellite programs.

Co-Op Program

The ASDB Co-Op’s are administered through 5 regional centers located throughout the state. Each Co-Op is established through an agreement with member school districts that specify which services ASDB is expected to provide to the districts’ sensory impaired pupils. The stated goal of the program is “for public education agencies and ASDB to work together in an efficient and cost effective manner to enable children and youth with sensory impairments to reach their maximum level of potential by providing appropriate local educational programs and services.”

The services performed through a Co-Op agreement vary depending on the needs of the school. They typically, however, include 1) assistance with identifying children who are sensory impaired, 2) assistance with evaluating the extent of the student’s sensory impairment and the development of an IEP, 3) providing instruction and specialized equipment for sensory impaired students, and 4) offering assistance and teacher development services for a sensory impaired student’s general education program.

The Co-op program allows sensory impaired students to obtain the majority of their education in traditional classrooms and receive specialized instruction from an itinerant teacher either through individualized instruction or classroom assistance. This allows the student to receive instruction in an environment that is less restrictive than at an ASDB campus. It also allows sensory impaired students to attend schools closer to their homes and with children who do not have special needs.

Satellite Program

ASDB satellite programs likewise enable sensory impaired pupils to receive instruction away from an ASDB main campus. Unlike Co-Ops, however, students in the Satellite program receive 100% of their instruction from an ASDB teacher and in a classroom that serves sensory impaired students only. The curriculum for these students is identical to the curriculum offered to students who attend an ASDB campus. Currently, the Satellite program is only for preschool and kindergarten students and uses classrooms located at public schools. There are 6 satellite preschool programs and 2 satellite kindergarten programs, all of which are located in the Phoenix Metropolitan Area. Students in the ASDB Satellite program have the opportunity to interact with non-sensory impaired students during recess and other non-instructional times at participating schools.

Program Funding

ASDB Co-Op’s fund their instructional costs either by including Co-Op students in ASDB’s enrollment counts for special education voucher funding (A.R.S § 15-1204) or by allowing school districts to “claim” the students in their Basic State Aid student counts and requiring them to reimburse ASDB for instructional costs on a “fee for service” basis. These funding arrangements vary depending on agreements established between ASDB and Co-Op members for individual schools and students. Monies that the Co-Op’s receive from both special education vouchers and fee for service reimbursements are deposited in ASDB’s Regional Cooperative Fund. As shown in *Table 1*, ASDB is expected to receive about \$13.2 million in Regional Cooperative Fund revenues in FY 2006.

ASDB receives General Fund monies to pay for administrative costs of the Co-Op program. As shown in *Table 1*, the program currently receives about \$1 million per year in General Fund monies for program administration.

The estimated \$13.2 million total funding amount shown for the program in *Table 1* reflects an increase of about \$1.1 million (7.6%) from FY 2005. Most of this increase is due to enrollment growth.

The overall budget for the program currently includes 9.5 FTE Positions from the General Fund for administration and approximately 260 FTE Positions from the Regional Cooperative Fund for direct student services.

Satellite Program

ASDB's Satellite programs fund their instructional costs solely with monies generated through the special education voucher funding formula in A.R.S. § 15-1204. Monies received from that formula for this program are deposited into the Schools for the Deaf and the Blind Fund. ASDB enters into agreements with school districts to use classroom space for the Satellite program. In some instances ASDB is allowed to use the classroom space free of charge. In other instances ASDB pays the school district to use the classroom space.

In FY 2006, the Satellite program is funded at \$984,000. This is an increase of \$80,500 or 8.9%. The additional funding is for estimated enrollment growth in FY 2006.

Table 1 displays the historical funding information for the Satellite program by fund source using data from FY 2005, and FY 2006, "baseline" data from FY 2001 is not available. The total funding amounts for approximately 15 FTE Positions for direct student services.

Performance Measures

ASDB does not track separate performance measures for the Co-Op or Satellite programs. ASDB does currently have a performance measure pertaining to parental satisfaction with its overall programs, but not for the Co-Op or Satellite programs separately. ASDB should begin to track parental satisfaction with the Co-Op and Satellite programs as a separate performance measure.

Ideally, ASDB could develop performance measures that track the affect of the Co-Op and satellite programs on student achievement. This, however, may not be feasible for the Co-Op program because its students receive a portion of their instruction from their home school district and a portion of it from ASDB, so neither is solely responsible for academic gains made by Co-Op students.

Students in the Satellite program receive all of their instruction from an ASDB teacher, so it might be possible for ASDB to track academic achievement of its satellite pupils as a gauge of program effectiveness. Currently, however, the state does not administer standardized tests to preschool or Kindergarten pupils (the only pupils served by the ASDB satellite program), so some alternative measures of academic gain would be required in order to establish a performance measure in this area.

Table 1

Co-Op and Satellite Program Funding History

	<u>FY 2001</u>	<u>FY 2005</u>	<u>FY 2006</u>
Co-Op Program			
General Fund	Not Available	\$ 1,046,100	\$ 1,056,700
Regional Cooperative Fund	Not Available	<u>12,139,200</u>	<u>13,139,000</u>
Total – Co-Op Program		\$13,185,300	\$14,195,700
Satellite Program			
Schools for the Deaf and the Blind Fund	Not Available	\$903,000	\$984,000